

Dear Commissioners:

Stop hidden phone fees so I can truly compare prices of phone services. I support the petition filed by the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates and endorsed by other consumer advocacy organizations. CG Docket No. 04-208, Petition for Declaratory Ruling Regarding Truth-In-Billing and Billing Format, is long overdue.

Phone bills should be truthful and easy to understand. I spend way too much time dissecting all the numbers/amounts that appear on my bill everytime, and it gets me nowhere anyway, so I end up calling customer service to explain the "charges" to me. Plus, they added an extra dollar to my voicemail service without any previous notice. Now, the voicemail costs so much more than the actual line charge! Naturally, I had to cancel my voicemail. It's ridiculous having to put up with different kinds of charges: line charge, residence service charge, federal access charge, federal universal service fee, and if your check happens to hit a snag in the mail delivery, a reconnection charge, just for being a minute late. Please stop all this madness. Help us be more in control of our bills by making us understand them better.

Because this practice is tolerated by the FCC, long distance and wireless phone companies are able to hide the true cost of service. These add-ons make the advertised price of service significantly less than the amount of the check I have to write each month to pay the bill. Competition will not work if consumers cannot accurately compare prices when shopping for service.

Many states are stepping up to address this problem. They should be allowed to proceed. However, the FCC shouldn't shirk its responsibility, nor limit states from doing more.

The FCC should immediately grant the NASUCA petition to investigate billing practices, and prohibit phone and wireless companies from imposing separate monthly fees, line items or surcharges unless expressly mandated by law or the charge is expressly authorized by a governmental authority.